

# FLOWER AND PLANT LORE.

BY EDWARD TYRRELL, TORONTO.

## CHRYSANTHEMUM—NATIONAL FLOWER OF CHINA AND JAPAN.

A PLANT with small yellow flowers was brought from Nimpu, China, in 1764, and cultivated for a short time in the Botanical Gardens, Chelsea, but was soon lost. The next one, known as the old red or purple, the first of the large flowering varieties, was introduced from France in 1795, where it had been known for about six years, and received into the Royal Botanical Gardens, although the ingenious florist of the far east had, with great ardour, cultivated them for many centuries.

The name Chrysanthemum was given by the Greeks, and is derived from the Greek words Chrysos (gold) Anthos (a flower), as it appears they only knew the yellow flower, and this name has since been handed down and applied to this genera of plants, although we have them in nearly all the colors of the rainbow.

Mr. John Reeves, a tea buyer at Canton, who acted as agent for the London Horticultural Society, was very energetic and increased the stock by procuring and sending over numbers of plants of various colors. Mr. Salter says the first English seedlings were raised in 1835, and in 1849 he had over four hundred new varieties.

The first Chrysanthemum exhibition was held in 1843, by the flower loving people of Norwich, Norfolk. At the close of the war with China, 1842, when Hong-Kong and the Isle of Chusan were retained by the British, Mr. Robert Fortune was sent out by the London Horticultural Society to collect rare plants, and one of the curiosities he fell in with was the Chusan daisy. This and another small flower from the same source were the parents of the tribe known from their resemblance to a rosette, as Pom-poms. These were introduced in 1847.

In Japan, a favorite floral decoration at fetes and festivals, consists in artificial chrysanthemum ladies made of many thousands of blossoms and placed in alcoves or summer houses, where they attract numerous admirers. Mr. Parsons, in his "Notes on Japan," says: "The first really fine chrysanthemums I saw were in Yokohama early in November. I was disappointed to find that they were in temporary sheds put up to protect them from rain and sun, and not in masses out of doors, as I expected to see them. They were excellently grown, and in the softened light of the oil-paper shades their colors showed to great advantage. The plants are treated by them much as they are with us. Some plants are reduced to a single stem, on which one enormous blossom is allowed to develop, with each flower stiffly tied to a horizontal support. But the excellence of the gardener is best shown in growing large bushes, which have been known to carry as many as four hundred flowers of medium size, all in perfect condition on the same day. An English gardener who had visited every show within reach of Tokio, including the Emperor's celebrated collection in the palace grounds, said that he had seen no individual blooms equal to the best dozen or so at a first rate London exhibition, but these great plants with their hundreds of flowers were triumphs of horticulture."

This beautiful and useful flower is of very easy culture, and might be grown in pots in the open air in summer, and removed to a sheltered place (but in the sunlight), such as a porch or bay window as soon as the cold weather comes on, or a home made frame might be easily constructed at a very small cost, with lights for a roof, and one could have very nice plants for the house until very late in the season.